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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/751,318

01/03/2004

Jay Whaley

Jay Whaley

1995

7590

07/19/2006

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EXAMINER

COMPTON, ERIC B

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3726

DATE MAILED: 07/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/751,318

Applicant(s)

WHALEY, JAY

Examiner

Eric B. Compton

Art Unit

3726

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities: only the first word of the claim and Applicant defined words, e.g., the "Retailer," should be capitalized. Also, there should only be a single "and" immediately preceding the last method step of the claim.

Appropriate correction is required.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office, and MPEP § 609.04(a) states, "the list may not be incorporated into the specification but must be submitted in a separate paper." Therefore, unless the references have been cited by the examiner on form PTO-892, they have not been considered.

35 USC § 112, 6th Paragraph

3. Applicant use of "means by which ..." repeatedly in claim 1 appears to invoke – "means or step-plus-function" claim interpretation under 35 U.S.C. 112, 6th paragraph.

MPEP § 2181 provides:

A claim limitation will be interpreted to invoke 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph, if it meets the following 3-prong analysis:

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- (A) the claim limitations must use the phrase "means for" or "step for;"
- (B) the "means for" or "step for" must be modified by functional language; and
- (C) the phrase "means for" or "step for" must not be modified by sufficient structure, material or acts for achieving the specified function.

With respect to the first prong of this analysis, a claim element that does not include the phrase "means for" or "step for" will not be considered to invoke 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph. If an applicant wishes to have the claim limitation treated under 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph, applicant must either: (A) amend the claim to include the phrase "means for" or "step for" in accordance with these guidelines; or (B) show that even though the phrase "means for" or "step for" is not used, the claim limitation is written as a function to be performed and does not recite sufficient structure, material, or acts which would preclude application of 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph. See *Watts v. XL Systems, Inc.*, 232 F.3d 877, 56 USPQ2d 1836 (Fed. Cir. 2000) (Claim limitations were held not to invoke 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph, because the absence of the term "means" raised the presumption that the limitations were not in means-plus-function form, nor was the presumption rebutted.); see also *Masco Corp. v. United States*, 303 F.3d 1316, 1327, 64 USPQ2d 1182, 1189 (Fed. Cir. 2002) ("[W]here a method claim does not contain the term 'step[s] for,' a limitation of that claim cannot be construed as a step-plus-function limitation without a showing that the limitation contains no act.").

Accordingly, since "means for" or "step for" language was not expressly used in claim 1, the Examiner is not treating the claim as invoking 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

6. Regarding claim 1, the phrases: "such means including but not limited" (clause 3); "plaster or Paris or similar material" (clause 4); "such as but not limited to" (clause 9); "including be not limited to" (clause 11) render the claim(s) indefinite because the claim(s) include(s) elements not actually disclosed (those encompassed by "such as," "or the like," "for example," etc.), thereby rendering the scope of the claim(s) unascertainable. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. 6,435,255 to Kaladjian and/or "Magic Custard" Website in view of U.S. Pats. 3,626,718 to Schneider; 3,255,611 to Doherty); and/or 3,071,940 to Schneider.

Kaladjian discloses a mail order kit for allowing a customer to form a piece of jewelry. The customer makes an impression on wax medium (10), which is sent to the retailer to be formed by lost-wax casting into the piece of jewelry. See Col. 2, lines 57-60.

The "Magic Custard" Website discloses a kit for making molds of casts of a baby's hand or feet. The mold is sent to the customer, who generates a plaster cast. The customer may send the mold back to the Company to have it transformed into a solid metal, e.g., bronze or silver.

Note: the basics of lost-wax casting and jewelry making are well known as discussed by Applicant in the Specification on pages 1-7, corresponding to claim 1, clauses (4-8), and are inherently relied on by Kalajian and "Magic Custard" Website, as appropriate.

Thus, the two references disclose kits for use by the customers, which can be sent via mail to and from a retailer/manufacturer. However, the reference do not necessarily teach that the retailer then mails the customer's casting or replica onto a manufacturer who actually forms the jewelry item.

Schneider) & Doherty all disclose in their background descriptions the state of the art of custom-made jewelry. These references note retail jewelers typically are not equipped for manufacturing jewelry, but out-source specifications to jewelry manufactures (or factories) because the retails do not necessarily have the equipment and/or expertise to manufacture themselves.


Regarding claim 1, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made for the retailer to have outsourced the customer's design to a manufacturer (factory), in light of the teachings of Schneider and Doherty, since the retailer may not be equipped or have the expertise to manufacture himself.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric B. Compton whose telephone number is (571) 272-4527. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David P. Bryant can be reached on (571) 272-4526. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Eric B. Compton
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3726

ebc